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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associated NBC radio stations, Tuesday, May 29, 1934

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Hello folks. Last Tuesday in my Garden Calendar I mentioned the three leading methods of applying water to our gardens during dry periods. These were the overhead or sprinkler system, the furrow or flooding system, and the sub-irrigation system. I believe I told you that I had found the plan of making little furrows alongside the rows of plants and letting the water flow through these furrows the cheapest and most satisfactory. I also suggested that a few lengths of threaded pipe and a section of garden hose be secured to deliver water to the garden. Now I realize that pipe and garden hose both cost money and some of us can not afford to spend money for things of this character, but, difficulties of this kind can sometimes be overcome at little or no expense. I knew of one southern gardener who took sections of cane or bamboo, bored out the joints with an auger attached to a long stem and then fitted the sections of bamboo together to form a pipe to carry water from an artesian well to his garden. Another gardener nailed strips of wood together to form a V shaped trough to carry water from a tank to his garden. There's one point to observe in this whole matter of watering your garden crops and that is don't sprinkle but give your plants a good watering when you do apply water then wait until the soil becomes fairly dry before you give it another watering.

This advice about soaking the soil will apply to the watering of lawns and a good watering once a week during dry weather is much better than sprinkling a little every day or so. You folks who have nice shrubbery plantings around your house foundations please note that the soil next the house foundations dries out, in fact the space next the house seldom gets its quota of rainfall because it is sheltered by the eaves of the house. During dry periods the shrubbery is pretty sure to suffer for moisture unless you give the plants water. It's a good idea to make a small depression in the soil near the base of each plant then fill these depressions with water from time to time. Waste water from the kitchen, if not soapy or greasy, can be used for watering the shrubbery. If you have a nice lot of plants growing about your house don't neglect them and allow them to suffer for moisture. A mulch of some kind over the surface between the shrubs will help to hold the moisture.

So much for that. Now a word about the summer care of outdoor roses. In many sections the bush roses including the teas and hybrid teas are just coming into bloom. Climbing roses are also just beginning to bloom. Certain of the old fashioned bush roses also many of the climbers bloom but once each year and they need a good pruning and reshaping just as soon as they finish blooming. Get rid of most of the old wood and give the plants a chance to make new growth for next year. The hybrid perpetual roses and the hybrid teas need rather constant pruning or a rather thorough renovating after each crop of bloom. The old method of growing roses was to let the plants make as many stems and flowers as possible while the modern idea is to prune heavily, produce a few strong stems and a limited number of choice flowers. Where you are cutting plenty of roses with long stems for the house this cutting of the flowers will naturally give the plants plenty severe cutting back but where you let the flowers remain you will need to follow up with thorough pruning. In the case of the climbers, go over them as soon as they finish blooming and take off the greater part of the wood that bloomed this year. The long branches can

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be shortened back to the point where new shoots are forming or even to the very ground and new shoots will take their place. It is on the new wood that you get the best flowers next season.

The same advice applies to the spring blooming shrubs. Just as soon as they are through blooming give them a complete pruning; head back the long branches; thin out the branches where they have become too thick and remove any and all dead wood. You want a fresh, new growth for a good crop of flowers next season. Evergreens that are getting out of bounds can be sheared or cut back while they are making an active growth and they will soon form a new tip growth that will hide the places where you cut them back. A little pruning of the arbor vitae and other evergreens of that class each and every year will prevent their becoming overgrown.

Here is another pointer for the care of your grape vines. If the new growth is vigorous and the laterals are becoming too long you can pinch them back also if there are a lot of poor, weak new branches or canes forming, pinch them out and let all of the strength of the vine go into the main laterals that bear the fruit. By thinning out you can let the sunlight and air into the plants and that will help you to control diseases. In case the new canes of your raspberries or blackberries are getting too tall, pinch out the growing tip and make them branch.

Well folks I've rambled pretty much all over the garden today but I trust I have given you a few suggestions that will help you in your gardens and fruit growing. Next Tuesday I hope to be back with you and to have as my guest Mr. George Darrow, the man who created those new varieties of strawberries that I've been talking about. Incidentally I understand that last week Mr. Salisbury inveigled Miss Van Deman into a promise to provide a strawberry short-cake on condition that I would furnish the berries. Well I'll furnish the berries all right.